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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SY-05 DHA-02 IO-13 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /079 W

R 151250Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6336

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 4617

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, SCUL, AR

SUBJECT: CATHOLIC CHURCH ISSUES RESTRAINED STATEMENT ON POLITICAL
VIOLENCE

022849

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release () Exclude () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (☒) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 4487, (B) BUENOS AIRES 3866

1. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS' EPISCOPAL
CONFERENCE, WHICH INCLUDES CARDINALS ARAMBURU AND PRIMATESTA,
RELEASED ON JULY 13 A SHORT STATEMENT DEPLORING CURRENT
POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN ARGENTINA. MESSAGE WAS ADDRESSED TO
PRESIDENT VIDELA AND OTHER JUNTA MEMBERS, AND EXPRESSED
CONCERN OF COMMITTEE OVER "...VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF
VIOLENCE..." WHICH "ENDANGER PEACE AND BRING SUFFERING TO
THE ARGENTINE COMMUNITY." MESSAGE WAS INSPIRED BY "...RECENT
EVENTS WHICH HAVE DEEPLY WOUNDED THE HEART OF THE CHURCH AND
THE PEOPLE..."

2. CARDINAL ARAMBURU AND PAPAL NUNCIO CALLED ON MIN INTERIOR
MARGUINDEGUY JULY 13 TO ADVISE HIM OF MESSAGE AND REPORTEDLY
ALSO TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN STATUS OF PRIESTS BEING HELD BY
JOA UNDER STATE OF SIEGE PROVISIONS.

3. COMMENT. DURING CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR JULY 8
(REFTEL A) PAPAL NUNCIO SAID THAT CHURCH WOULD ISSUE
GENERAL STATEMENT ON VIOLENCE, WITHOUT SPECIFIC REFERENCE

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TO KILLING OF FIVE PRIESTS AND SEMINARIANS ON JULY 4.
CONSIDERING THAT CHURCH KNOWS THAT ITS CLERGY WERE KILLED
BY POLICE, AND CARDINAL ARAMBURU THREW ACCUSATION IN FACE
OF HARGUINDEGUY, TONE OF MESSAGE TO VIDELA AND JUNTA IS
REMARKABLY RESTRAINED. WE SUSPECT MEETING OF ARAMBURU AND
NUNCIO WITH HARGUINDEGUY YESTERDAY MAY HAVE BEEN
STORMY AFFAIR, BUT

DOE NOT YET HAVE REPORT ON MEETING.
WHILE CHURCH APPARENTLY WILLING TO SPEAK HARSHLY IN PRIVATE
TO GOA, IT STILL CLINGS PUBLICLY TO REFRAIN, NEUTRAL
POSTURE DISCUSSED IN REFTEL B. IF THERE ARE MORE DIRECT
ATTACKS ON CHURCH ITSELF, SUCH AS MURDER OF PRIESTS, IT
MAY BE FORCED INTO MUCH MORE OPEN CRITICISM OF GOA, KKDER
PRESSURE OF LIBERAL ELEMENTS WITHIN CLERGY.
HILL

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